United Nations A/72/PV.106

General Assembly
Seventy-second session

Official Records

106th plenary meeting
Friday, 13 July 2018, 10 a.m.
New York

President: Mr. Lajčák ..... (Slovakia)

The meeting was called to order at 10.05 a.m.

Agenda item 7 (*continued*)

Organization of work, adoption of the agenda and allocation of items

The President: I invite the attention of the General Assembly to a letter dated 2 July 2018 from the Permanent Representative of Luxembourg to the United Nations, circulated in document A/72/924, concerning the vacant seat following the withdrawal of the United States of America from the Human Rights Council. As a vacancy has occurred in the Council, a new member must be elected to fill the unexpired term of the United States of America.

Before we proceed further, members will recall that the General Assembly concluded its consideration of sub-item (d) of agenda item 114 at its 31st plenary meeting, on 16 October 2017. For the Assembly to proceed with the election of one member of the Council to fill the vacancy, it will be necessary to reopen the consideration of the sub-item.

May I take it that it is the wish of the General Assembly to reopen the consideration of sub-item (d) of agenda item 114?

It was so decided.

Agenda item 114 (*continued*)

Elections to fill vacancies in subsidiary organs and other elections

(d) Election of fifteen members of the Human Rights Council

The President: Pursuant to resolution 60/251 of 15 March 2006, and taking into account that the vacancy occurred from among Western European and other States, the new member should be elected from that region. The new member shall be elected directly and individually, by secret ballot, by the majority of the members of the General Assembly. Accordingly, 97 votes would constitute a majority in the General Assembly, which has a membership of 193 States.

I should like to inform members that the following States from among Western European and other States are currently represented on the Human Rights Council: Australia, Belgium, Germany, Spain, Switzerland and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland. The names of these six States should therefore not appear on the ballot.

The election will be held in accordance with the relevant rules of procedure of the General Assembly on elections. For this election, rules 92 and 93 of the rules of procedure of the General Assembly shall be applied, on the understanding that balloting will continue until one candidate receives the required majority, that is, the majority of the members of the General Assembly, in accordance with resolution 60/251, provided that, after

This record contains the text of speeches delivered in English and of the translation of speeches delivered in other languages. Corrections should be submitted to the original languages only. They should be incorporated in a copy of the record and sent under the signature of a member of the delegation concerned to the Chief of the Verbatim Reporting Service, room U-0506 (verbatimrecords@un.org). Corrected records will be reissued electronically on the Official Document System of the United Nations (http://documents.un.org).

18-22211 (E)

Accessible document Please recycle

the third inconclusive ballot, votes may be cast for any eligible Member.

If three such unrestricted ballots are inconclusive, the next three ballots shall be restricted to the two candidates who obtained the greatest number of votes in the third round of the unrestricted ballots, and the following three ballots thereafter shall be restricted, and so on. The election shall be held by secret ballot.

Consistent with past practice, if, due to a tie vote, it becomes necessary to determine one candidate that will proceed to the next round of restricted balloting, there will be a special restricted ballot limited to those candidates that have obtained an equal number of votes.

May I take it that the General Assembly agrees to these procedures?

It was so decided.

The President: I have also been informed by the Secretariat that a document setting out the voluntary pledges and commitments of a candidate for the seat, in accordance with paragraph 8 of resolution 60/251, has been issued as an official document of the seventy-second session of the General Assembly (A/72/923).

Before we begin the voting process, I should like to remind members that, pursuant to rule 88 of the rules of procedure of the General Assembly, no representative shall interrupt the voting except on a point of order on the actual conduct of the voting. In addition, ballot papers will be given only to the representative seated directly behind the country's nameplate.

We shall now begin the voting process. Members are requested to remain seated until all ballots have been collected.

In accordance with resolution 71/323 of 8 September 2017, the name of the State that has been communicated to the Secretariat, at least 48 hours prior to the election today, has been printed on the ballot paper for the one regional group concerned. Also, an additional blank line corresponding to the number of the vacant seat to be filled for the regional group has been provided on the ballot paper for inscribing another State, as necessary.

I request representatives to use only the ballot papers that have been distributed. Members are requested to put an "X" in the box next to the name printed on the ballot paper or write the name of another eligible State on the blank line. If the box next to the name printed on the ballot paper is checked, the name of that State does not need to be repeated on the blank line.

The number of checked boxes and/or handwritten names should not exceed the number of the vacant seats to be filled, as indicated on the ballot paper. A ballot will be declared invalid if it contains more than one name for the one vacant seat from the region. If a ballot paper contains the names of Member States that do not belong to the region concerned or names of Member States from that region that are current members of the Council, the ballot paper remains valid but the vote for these Member States will not be counted.

At the invitation of the President, Mrs. Přikrylová (Czech Republic), Ms. Rheindrayani (Indonesia), Ms. Bailey (Jamaica), Mr. Ndiaye (Senegal), Ms. Lyngdorf (Sweden) and Mrs. Harqoos (United Arab Emirates) acted as tellers.

A vote was taken by secret ballot.

The meeting was suspended at 10.20 a.m. and resumed at 10.40 a.m.

The President: The result of the voting is as follows:

Group E — Western European and other States (1 seat)

Number of ballot papers:	178
Number of invalid ballots:	0
Number of valid ballots:	178
Abstentions:	5
Number of members present and voting:	173
Required majority:	97
Number of votes obtained:	
Iceland	172
France	1

Having obtained the required majority, Iceland was elected a member of the Human Rights Council for a term of office beginning on 13 July 2018 and ending on 31 December 2019.

The President: I congratulate Iceland on having been elected a member of the Human Rights Council.

The General Assembly has thus concluded its consideration of sub-item (d) of agenda item 114.

Agenda item 55 (*continued*)

Comprehensive review of the whole question of peacekeeping operations in all their aspects

Report of the Special Political and Decolonization Committee (Fourth Committee) (A/72/449/Add.1)

The President: The positions of delegations regarding the recommendation of the Special Political and Decolonization Committee (Fourth Committee) have been made clear in the Committee and are reflected in the relevant official records. Therefore, if there is no proposal under rule 66 of the rules of procedure, I shall take it that the General Assembly decides not to discuss the report of the Special Political and Decolonization Committee (Fourth Committee) which is before the Assembly today.

It was so decided.

The President: Accordingly, statements will be limited to explanations of vote. May I remind members that under paragraph 7 of decision 34/401, the General Assembly agreed that

> "[w]hen the same draft resolution is considered in a Main Committee and in plenary meeting, a delegation should, as far as possible, explain its vote only once, that is, either in the Committee or in plenary meeting, unless that delegation's vote in plenary meeting is different from its vote in the Committee".

May I also remind delegations that, also in accordance with decision 34/401, explanations of vote are limited to 10 minutes and should be made by delegations from their seats.

Before we begin to take action on the recommendation contained in the report of the Special Political and Decolonization Committee (Fourth Committee), I should like to advise representatives that we are going to proceed to take a decision in the same manner as was done in the Special Political and Decolonization Committee (Fourth Committee), unless notified otherwise in advance.

The General Assembly has before it a draft resolution recommended by the Committee in paragraph 6 of its report. The Assembly will now take a decision on the draft resolution recommended by the Special Political and Decolonization Committee (Fourth Committee) in paragraph 6 of its report. The Special Political and Decolonization Committee (Fourth Committee) adopted the draft resolution without a vote. May I take that the General Assembly wishes to do the same?

The draft resolution was adopted (resolution 72/304).

The President: The General Assembly has thus concluded this stage of its consideration of agenda item 55.

The meeting rose at 10.45 a.m.

United Nations A/72/PV.107

General Assembly
Seventy-second session

Official Records

107th plenary meeting
Monday, 23 July 2018, 10 a.m.
New York

President: Mr. Lajčák ..... (Slovakia)

In the absence of the President, Mr. Tevi (Vanuatu), Vice-President, took the Chair.

The meeting was called to order at 10.10 a.m.

Agenda items 14 and 117 (*continued*)

Integrated and coordinated implementation of and follow-up to the outcomes of the major United Nations conferences and summits in the economic, social and related fields

Follow-up to the outcome of the Millennium Summit

Draft resolution (A/72/L.64)

The Acting President: We shall now proceed to consider draft resolution A/72/L.64. Before giving the floor for explanations of position, I would like to remind delegations that explanations are limited to 10 minutes and should be made by delegations from their seats.

I now call on the representative of Egypt, who wishes to speak in explanation of position before action is taken on the draft resolution.

Ms. Elgarf (Egypt): On behalf of the Group of 77 and China, I have the honour to deliver the following explanation of position before the adoption of draft resolution A/72/L.64, entitled "Review of the implementation of General Assembly resolution 68/1 on the strengthening of the Economic and Social Council", under agenda items 14 and 117.

The Group of 77 joined a hard consensus on the draft resolution on the review process of the Economic and Social Council, based on our belief in the Council's important work and its role in strengthening developing countries' efforts to implement the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and achieve sustainable development, within its mandate as stipulated in Article 62 of the Charter of the United Nations, which clearly identifies the Economic and Social Council's powers and functions.

The Group of 77 does not interpret the language in operative paragraph 2 of the draft resolution, before the annex, on the process of review of the High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development and the Economic and Social Council at its seventy-fourth session and its subsequent review cycles, as meaning that they will be conducted either jointly or in conjunction with each other. The review processes of the forum and the Economic and Social Council remain separate. The review process of the high-level political forum on sustainable development and of the Council at its seventy-fourth session, and its subsequent cycles, should not lead to a merger or to a combining of the outcomes or the two processes of the forum and the Council in one document or as one review process. The Group wants to emphasize its firm belief that the Forum and the Economic and Social Council are two distinct processes in their legal mandate, scope and composition, according to the relevant General Assembly resolutions.

The Group of 77 believes that the ninth preambular paragraph, which contains a reference to ongoing consultations on enhancing synergies and coherence

This record contains the text of speeches delivered in English and of the translation of speeches delivered in other languages. Corrections should be submitted to the original languages only. They should be incorporated in a copy of the record and sent under the signature of a member of the delegation concerned to the Chief of the Verbatim Reporting Service, room U-0506 (verbatimrecords@un.org). Corrected records will be reissued electronically on the Official Document System of the United Nations (http://documents.un.org).

18-23506 (E)

Accessible document Please recycle

and reducing overlap where it is found to exist in the agendas of the General Assembly, the Economic and Social Council and their subsidiary bodies, mandated through the General Assembly's separate resolution 71/323, goes beyond the mandate of resolution 68/1. The reference to the synergies and coherence process should not be used or interpreted to undermine or compromise the Group's position in the synergies and coherence process. Resolutions 71/323 and 68/1 remain separate.

We regret the fact that paragraph 8 of the annex does not explicitly reflect the full complement of the meetings and forums on the means of implementation. We strongly believe that the Economic and Social Council's special annual meeting on international cooperation on tax matters, as a fundamental platform for intergovernmental collaboration on tax matters, is one of the structural meetings of the Council's activities, based on the relevant General Assembly resolutions.

The language in paragraph 21 of the annex on possible ways of applying to other meetings and segments certain aspects of the modalities of engagement of major groups and other stakeholders in the high-level political forum is vague and ambiguous. The Group underlines that stakeholder participation should adhere to the parameters established for their participation, notably the non-objection basis and respect for the terms of reference for their participation. The Council's implementation of paragraph 21 should be conducted in a transparent manner, and it should not divert or undermine relevant existing rules or create a new mandate for stakeholders' participation.

The Group of 77 is of the view that paragraph 30 of the annex does not mandate the subsidiary bodies of the Economic and Social Council to eliminate or decide on the need for annual negotiated outcomes.

The Acting President: We have heard the only speaker in explanation of position. The Assembly will now take action on draft resolution A/72/L.64, entitled "Review of the implementation of General Assembly resolution 68/1 on the strengthening of the Economic and Social Council".

May I take it that the Assembly decides to adopt draft resolution A/72/L.64?

Draft resolution A/72/L.64 was adopted (resolution 72/305).

The Acting President: I shall now call on those representatives who wish to speak in explanation of position on the resolution just adopted. I would like to remind delegations that explanations of position are limited to 10 minutes and should be made by delegations from their seats.

I give the floor to the representative of Austria, who will speak on behalf of the European Union.

Mr. Kickert (Austria): I have the honour to speak on behalf of the European Union (EU) and its member States.

Let me start by thanking the co-facilitators, the Permanent Representatives of Iceland and Qatar, for their work during the past month. This was not an easy process.

At the first consultation six months ago, we made it clear that our overarching policy objective for this exercise was to align the Economic and Social Council with the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. In order to strengthen the Council's relevance, impact and credibility, we suggested focusing on four overarching objectives: first, clarity, which should start with a common understanding of the division of labour between the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council; secondly, comprehensiveness — the need to systematically review the structures established before 2015 in the light of the 2030 Agenda; thirdly, intelligibility, as clarity of purpose would help better communicate what the Council does and identify where it can add value; and, fourthly, inclusiveness, because a strong Economic and Social Council has to be open to the world and the various actors that make it up.

However, throughout the negotiation process we were faced with attempts to undermine those objectives. At a time when we are all striving to adapt to the 2030 Agenda at the national level, some have argued that the Economic and Social Council's response should be to not change — to maintain the status quo. Though we joined the consensus today, we very much regret that the text of resolution 72/305, which we have just adopted, falls short of the ambition that guided our engagement. At a time when we should be striving to strengthen the legitimacy of the system, our collective inability to meaningfully strengthen the Economic and Social Council undermines it. I will now give a few examples.

First, though policy integration is a cross-cutting priority, the integration segment has lost its purpose

since the creation of the high-level political forum on sustainable development and should therefore be eliminated. Our proposal in that direction was blocked. Secondly, in the 2030 Agenda, we acknowledged that we needed all available forces to help deliver on the Goals, but when it comes to the participation of civil society, the Economic and Social Council remains stuck in the past. The measures that we proposed to address that were all blocked. Thirdly, the artificial duality of the High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development and the high-level segments of the Economic and Social Council, including the ministerial declaration adopted by both, continues to negatively affect the Council's credibility. We made proposals to fix that, but they were blocked. Fourthly, we argued throughout the process that the special event on the transition from relief to development should be rebranded in line with today's reality. Even that proposal was blocked.

At the same time, we witnessed attempts to eliminate from the text references to structural elements that are at the core of the Economic and Social Council's work. I will mention only two. The first reference is to the Secretariat. The Department of Social and Economic Affairs performs essential support functions for the Economic and Social Council, and the General Assembly mandated its reform two years ago. The reform will be key to strengthening the Council's capacity to deliver value and should not be postponed any longer. The second was to the Peacebuilding Commission. We strongly regret that the final text is silent on the link between the Economic and Social Council and the Peacebuilding Commission, despite the existence of agreed General Assembly language on that matter.

The EU is committed to multilateralism, but a multilateralism that is geared to delivering results. Three years into the 2030 Agenda, we have no time to waste, and the Economic and Social Council should be enabled to lead by example and embrace the future rather than cling to the past. During the seventy-fourth session of the General Assembly, both the High-level Political Forum and the Council will be reviewed in conjunction. We hope that all partners can then come to the table with renewed ambition and that the Economic and Social Council can finally be allowed to fulfil its potential.

Mr. Srivihok (Thailand): I have the honour to speak on behalf of the 10 States members of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) — Brunei Darussalam, Cambodia, Indonesia, the Lao People's Democratic Republic, Malaysia, Myanmar, the Philippines, Singapore, Viet Nam and my own country, Thailand.

At the outset, ASEAN aligns itself with the statement delivered earlier by the representative of Egypt on behalf of the Group of 77 and China.

The 10 ASEAN member States congratulate all member States on the important adoption of resolution 72/305 today. We join the colleagues who have preceded us in expressing appreciation to the facilitators, the Permanent Representatives of Iceland and Qatar, and their teams, for their hard work, perseverance and strong faith in multilateralism and intergovernmental processes, such as the current one, so that today we arrive at a consensual middle ground that enables all of us to move forward.

The 10 countries of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations joined the consensus on resolution 72/305 to underscore the importance of the Economic and Social Council and reaffirm our support for the Council. The ASEAN Community Vision 2025 and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development are complementary and mutually reinforcing. For ASEAN, therefore, the Economic and Social Council is of critical importance to helping us pursue sustainable development, particularly in a manner that is balanced, comprehensive and inclusive, without leaving anyone behind. Our work in this context pertains to the lives of people on the ground and has an impact on their well-being in the long run.

At the same time, the Economic and Social Council cannot remain static. It needs adjustment to better respond to and address today's pressing realities and challenges. We regret to witness the unprecedented trends and challenges, particularly during the recent High-Level Political Forum and the Economic and Social Council high-level segment, which are the key platforms for making progress on our common global goals, particularly the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

In that regard, ASEAN supports the Economic and Social Council review process that aims to strengthen the Council and its working modalities, guided by the principles of inclusiveness, transparency and flexibility, based on the deliberative function of its meetings. In line with the ongoing reform of the United Nations, the Economic and Social Council needs to be more effective

and fit for purpose to serve as the intergovernmental body that stimulates real in-depth debate and policy deliberations, enhanced mutual learning and knowledge-sharing and deepens engagement and partnership with all stakeholders.

I have three priority points to highlight in relation to the review process. First, the structure of the Economic and Social Council needs to support the balanced and integrated nature of the SDGs and ensure their implementation in all three dimensions — economic, social and environmental.

Secondly, one of the main areas in which the Economic and Social Council should remain focused is in strengthening of the means of implementation required to achieve the SDGs. Forums such as the annual Development Cooperation Forum, the Forum on Financing for Development, the Multi-Stakeholder Forum on Science, Technology and Innovation, and the Partnership Forum are extremely critical in this respect, providing as they do opportunities for Member States and other stakeholders to share experience and lessons learned and promote international cooperation and follow-up on commitments made.

Thirdly, we see the Economic and Social Council as the depository of a wealth of knowledge on economic and social issues to be tapped by Member States to support their national efforts. This can be found particularly in the subsidiary bodies, which have an indispensable role to play in translating knowledge into valuable policy advice and recommendations. We underscore the need for the subsidiary bodies to play an even more proactive role in providing Member States with practical, action-oriented solutions for addressing implementation challenges and gaps in achieving the SDGs.

Good reforms are not one-offs but should be a process that is responsive to evolving progress and challenges. Our work does not end in this Hall today, and all parties should continue working together in a constructive manner, including towards the next review cycle of the Economic and Social Council, at its seventy-fourth session. I wish to reassure the General Assembly of ASEAN's active engagement and full support in that process.

In conclusion, I would like to say a few words in my national capacity. Thailand sees the Economic and Social Council as a body that has served the interests of all countries, both developed and developing alike. Countries are progressing the right direction, but not fast enough with respect to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. We all look to the Economic and Social Council with high hopes. With its strengths and great potential, Thailand strongly believes that the Council will continue to deliver on its mandate and live up to the high expectations of us all. As a candidate for membership in the Economic and Social Council for the term 2020-2022, Thailand reaffirms its commitment and continued support for the Council in this regard.

Ms. Clifford (Australia): I have the honour of speaking on behalf of Canada, New Zealand and Australia (CANZ).

First, I offer thanks to the facilitators for their ongoing efforts in this difficult process. At the outset of negotiations, CANZ called for an ambitious outcome, one worthy of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the reform processes under way under the leadership of the Secretary-General. Today, we find the outcome document (resolution 72/305) less ambitious than we had hoped it would be. It is one that falls short of the ambition of the 2030 Agenda.

We note that there are some incremental steps in the right direction. For example, the integrated segment has been reduced to a single day. The Economic and Social Council's various bodies have been asked to review whether there is a continued need for their negotiated outcome documents. Future reviews of both the Economic and Social Council and the High-level Political Forum will now occur in conjunction at the seventy-fourth session of the Council, which should be given its plain-language meaning. There is also a call to limit to the greatest extent possible meetings to ordinary business hours.

But, regrettably, we were unable to make progress on a number of issues, for example, on the Development Cooperation Forum; on the high-level segment, whose mandate has been expanded despite the fact that we thought we should be looking towards its elimination given its overlap with the High-level Political Forum; the absence of language on the Peacebuilding Commission, despite multiple General Assembly resolutions mandating this closer work; the absence of any call concerning the urgent need to reform the Department of Economic and Social Affairs, pursuant to the mandate contained in 70/299, which is a critical ongoing process that must deliver real results, and with only a very weak reference, the need for the Committee

on Non-Governmental Organizations to complete its mandated work in a timely manner.

But despite all of these examples, we recognize that this is an ongoing process and that we will have occasion to reconsider many of these items two years from now. For this reason, we were prepared to join consensus at this time and look forward to working with Member States to ensure that our work in the Economic and Social Council and beyond is clearly aligned with the 2030 Agenda.

Mr. Ríos Sánchez (Mexico) (*spoke in Spanish*): Mexico welcomes the conclusion of the process of strengthening the Economic and Social Council and thanks the facilitators, the Permanent Representatives of Iceland and Qatar, for their efforts to reach a consensus text (resolution 72/305).

Before the start of this process, Mexico circulated a proposal to make the Council a more dynamic and efficient body. Although resolution 72/305 is not as ambitious as we would have liked, we recognize its positive elements, in particular the need for a deliberative Council. However, this does not depend only on this resolution, but also on the formats promoted by the President and his Bureau and, more importantly, on the decision of Member States to participate in meeting so that there are no more empty conference rooms.

We also value the high-level segment's mandate to discuss the contribution of new technologies to the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals and their targets. This is undoubtedly a crucial issue that offers great opportunities but also entails challenges that we have to address within the Organization.

While we support the review of the Economic and Social Council and the High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development, we regret that we will not be able to address a number of outstanding issues until the seventy-fourth session, thanks to the systematic opposition of a group of countries to a full review of the functions, format and timing of the Council and considering that the High-level Political Forum reports to it.

The effort to bring delegations closer together has had a negative effect on the balance between the Council segments. For instance, we added several activities to the integration segment but limited it to one day, while spending six days on procedural discussions that actually require no more than 10 hours per year. In short, we are sacrificing to management issues the substance of aligning the 2030 Agenda with other commitments in the Paris Climate Change Agreement and the Sendai Framework, among other things. Nor will we be able to overcome the artificial division between sustainable development and peacebuilding and sustaining peace, considering that the former is essential to the latter two.

To sum up, although Mexico would have wished for a more ambitious outcome, we joined the consensus in the hope that the next review will benefit from the reform process initiated by the Secretary-General in order to achieve the Economic and Social Council that a twenty-first-century organization needs.

Mr. Varganov (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): The Russian Federation joined the consensus on the adoption of resolution 72/305, on the review of the implementation of resolution 68/1, on the strengthening of the Economic and Social Council. Strengthening the Council's structure and improving its work are important elements in the general efforts to increase the effectiveness of the United Nations system's work as a whole. It is important to recall that the Council is an intergovernmental body, as enshrined in the Charter of the Organization, and occupies a central position in the United Nations system in promoting all three aspects of sustainable development — economic, social and environmental — and is also a central platform for discussion and the development of innovative thinking, achieving consensus on future directions for our work and coordinating efforts to achieve goals agreed at the international level. It is also responsible for following up on the outcomes of major United Nations conferences. The Russian Federation defended these key positions in the Economic and Social Council's mandate at every stage of the negotiations on the resolution. We hope that the revised structure and timetable will not present any obstacles to the Council's work.

We would like to make three key points. We support the inclusion in the resolution of provisions on the outcome ministerial declarations from the high-level political forum on sustainable development and the Economic and Social Council's high-level segment. Their approval by the Council is an important aspect in defining the key directions for its work in the near future and also in ensuring a hierarchy in the structure of the meetings and forums that take place under its auspices.

The participation of non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and representatives of civil society in the

Economic and Social Council is an important aspect of the Council's operations. However, it should not be conducted to the detriment of the intergovernmental character of the Council. We assume that issues of NGO participation will continue to be regulated in accordance with the relevant rules and procedures of the Council and its functional commissions on a no-objection basis.

Lastly, my final important point has to do with the provision on the Committee on Non-Governmental Organizations (NGO Committee), whose wording we still believe does not correspond to the true state of affairs. The mechanisms for monitoring the Committee's activity are already sufficient. In particular, this is done through the approval of the Committee's reports on the work of its regular and resumed sessions during the Council's session on management and coordination. We believe that the wording covers up the reluctance of some countries to comply with Economic and Social Council resolution 96/31 and their willingness to ignore the NGO Committee's recommendations when they do not suit some Committee member. The Committee can regulate its own activity, as was demonstrated by a new practical element, the 22 June meeting of the Advisory Committee with non-governmental organizations that have consultative status with the Economic and Social Council.

Mr. Cho Yeong Moo (Republic of Korea): At the outset, I would like to thank the Permanent Representatives of Ireland and Qatar for their tireless efforts and leadership during the consultation process. Given the importance of resolution 72/305 in terms of improving the Economic and Social Council's functioning in order to strengthen its role in policy, leadership and the coordination of the relevant parts of the United Nations system, my delegation hopes that the resolution will help to ensure that the Council is fit for purpose for the era of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

We will once again have an opportunity to consider the role and functions played by the Economic and Social Council in the General Assembly at its seventy-fourth session when we review and assess the High-level Political Forum. Through that process, we should be able to align the Council and the forum as fully as possible in order to maximize the synergies between the two bodies while keeping in mind their distinct mandates.

We are pleased that new and emerging issues have been given more prominence in the work of the Economic and Social Council, particularly through their incorporation into its high-level segment. This role of the Council will become increasingly important, and as the global community tries to adapt to very challenging realities, the Economic and Social Council should provide space for dialogue and peer learning. The Economic and Social Council should also provide better guidance for the United Nations system to assist Member States. Improved use of the operational-activity segment will be crucial in making the system-wide coordination of and accountability for the United Nations development system more effective. The revised segment will make that possible. Similarly, continued effort will be needed to improve the working methods of various parts of the Council so as to ensure coherence in its work.

We had hoped, however, that the resolution would be more forward-looking. One such area for that is partnership. We appreciate the emphasis on the importance of stakeholder participation and the need for exploring ways to do improve it. However, as the most inclusive multi-stakeholder organ of the United Nations, and one that functions all year long, the Economic and Social Council is well positioned to facilitate wider and better partnerships through systematic engagement with institutional and other stakeholders. We should strive for more concrete measures in the next review process. It is also regrettable that the paragraph on cooperation between the Economic and Social Council and the Peacebuilding Commission was removed from the final draft of the resolution. We firmly believe that we should encourage better, more effective cooperation between the two bodies.

Reiterating our full commitment to ensuring the relevance and leadership of the Economic and Social Council, the Republic of Korea will assist in current and future work to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of this vital organ.

Mr. Kimmel (United States of America): I would like to acknowledge the efforts of the facilitators, the Permanent Representatives of Iceland and Qatar, and their teams in support of these negotiations. We would also like to recognize those who engaged constructively in this process.

Working to improve the Economic and Social Council's tangled bureaucracy is a pressing challenge, and many delegations came forward with ambitious proposals for streamlining the Economic and Social

Council's overloaded schedule of meetings and negotiations, advancing the participation of civil society and improving the focus and relevance of the Council's work. Regrettably, resolution 72/305 takes only small steps in that direction. It passes on important tasks — such as improving the working methods of the functional commissions and the Committee on Non-Governmental Organizations (NGO Committee), reviewing the Economic and Social Council and the High-level Political Forum together, eliminating unproductive and duplicative negotiations and more — to future reviews. We call on all member States to ensure that those future reviews can be more productive than this one.

We should also seize upon the gains that we see in the resolution. Critically, it highlights the review of the NGO Committee's working methods and urges that the review be concluded in a timely manner. We strongly support improving the Committee's methods of work so as to enable it to fulfil its role to give civil society a voice in the United Nations system. Civil-society organizations are often the eyes and ears on the ground and an invaluable resource for reporting, yet for many non-governmental organizations (NGOs), including those with well-established international credibility, the NGO Committee continues to hinder their participation. We are pleased to see that the number of NGOs applying for Economic and Social Council consultative status continues to grow, an indication of the significance and impact that status has for NGOs worldwide. Unfortunately, for many NGOs, it takes two or more years to gain accreditation. Other applications for credible NGOs are delayed seemingly indefinitely. The current methods of work contribute to these and other challenges, undermining the effectiveness and the reputation of the Committee and the Economic and Social Council as a whole.

Today's resolution highlights the contribution of important outside stakeholders, including NGOs and the private sector. We hear time and again that the unique value of the Economic and Social Council is its convening power as part of the United Nations. That argument is hollow when civil society is excluded and ignored.

While this resolution reaffirms the role of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs (DESA) of the Secretariat, we think it falls wholly short in addressing the need for reforming DESA, which is crucial to the revitalization of the Economic and Social Council. DESA has to be more efficient and effective. The resolution also calls on the Council to avoid duplication and overlap in order to ensure efficiency and effectiveness, and emphasizes the division of labour of its work. That is critical. The Economic and Social Council and its subsidiary bodies will be most successful when they focus narrowly on areas of true comparative advantage and eliminate activities and negotiations where they do not have competence, authority or expertise.

We want to take this opportunity to make important points clarifying language related to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. We underscore that the 2030 Agenda is non-binding. It does not create or affect rights or obligations under international law or create any new financial commitments. The United States recognizes the 2030 Agenda as a global framework for sustainable development that can help countries work towards global peace and prosperity. We applaud the call for shared responsibility, including national responsibility, in the 2030 Agenda, and emphasize that all countries have a role to play in achieving its vision. The 2030 Agenda recognizes that each country must work towards implementation in accordance with its own national policies and priorities. The United States also underscores that paragraph 18 of the 2030 Agenda calls for countries to implement the Agenda in a manner that is consistent with the rights and obligations of States under international law.

We highlight our mutual recognition of the fact, as set out in paragraph 58 of the Agenda, that implementation must respect and be without prejudice to the independent mandates of other processes and institutions, including negotiations, and does not prejudge or serve as a precedent for decisions and actions under way in other forums. For example, the 2030 Agenda does not represent a commitment to providing new market access for goods or services, and it does not interpret or alter any World Trade Organization agreement or decision, including the Agreement on Trade-related Aspects of Intellectual Property.

We also would like to make important points of clarification regarding the Addis Ababa Action Agenda. Specifically, we note that much of the trade-related language in the Addis Ababa outcome document has been overtaken by events since July 2015 and is therefore immaterial. In addition, certain elements of the Small Island Developing States Accelerated Modalities of Action Pathway, such as those on international trade,

may have been overtaken by events and may no longer be implementable.

The New Urban Agenda is also a non-binding agreement that does not create or affect rights or obligations under international law. As we have noted elsewhere, the United States believes that each Member State has the sovereign right to determine how it conducts trade with other countries, and that includes restricting trade in certain circumstances. Economic sanctions, whether unilateral or multilateral, can be a successful means of achieving foreign-policy objectives. In cases where the United States has applied sanctions, they have been used with specific objectives in mind, including as a means to promote a return to the rule of law or democratic systems, encourage respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms or prevent threats to international security. We are within our rights to use our trade and commercial policies as tools to achieve those noble objectives. Targeted economic sanctions can be an appropriate, effective and legitimate alternative to the use of force.

With regard to the Istanbul Programme of Action for the Least Developed Countries for the Decade 2011-2020, the United States would like to highlight its concerns regarding the extent to which the Programme of Action encourages financial assistance to the Technology Bank and refers to technology transfer in ways that do not clearly indicate to be both voluntary and on mutually agreed terms. Such language will have no standing in future negotiations for the United States, and we continue to oppose language that we believe undermines intellectual property rights.

With respect to references to the Paris Climate Change Agreement, we note that the United States has announced its intention to withdraw from the Agreement as soon as it is eligible to do so, consistent with the terms of the Agreement, unless we can identify suitable terms for re-engagement.

The United States has been a strong supporter of disaster risk-reduction initiatives designed to reduce loss of life and the social and economic effects of disasters. However, we reiterate our views on the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction set forth in the explanation of the United States position delivered in Sendai on 18 March 2015, specifically with respect to coercive language on technology transfer, assumptions with regard to the meaning of the right to development or any language that creates new obligations or changes existing obligations of countries under international law and relevant international agreements, or that mandates any new activities.

Regarding new technologies mentioned in this resolution specifically, the United States tries to focus on how to maximize the benefits of existing, new and emerging technologies, including through the support of basic research, modernizing Government, and developing our science, technology, engineering and mathematics workforce. We are committed to creating an environment where new technologies can succeed. In addition, we are committed to achieving active multi-stakeholder engagement and public participation to promote accountability, optimize decision-making and recognize potential risks associated with new technologies as they arise, foster public trust and keep abreast of the latest research.

In conclusion, incremental as it may be, this resolution is a step towards a better functioning, more efficient, more focused and streamlined Economic and Social Council. At the same time, it falls far short of the improvements that we need. We encourage all delegations, as well as the Council's subsidiary bodies and the offices and staff in the Secretariat who support its work, to help realize and build on that progress.

Mr. Al-Hamadi (Qatar): I would like to deliver the following statement on behalf of Her Excellency Ambassador Alya Ahmed Saif Al-Thani, Permanent Representative of the State of Qatar to the United Nations, and His Excellency Ambassador Einar Gunnarsson, Permanent Representative of Iceland to the United Nations.

As co-facilitators of the review of resolution 68/1, on the strengthening of the Economic and Social Council, it gives us great pleasure to convey our gratitude to the President for convening this plenary meeting to consider resolution 72/305. We welcome the adoption of the resolution by consensus. We were humbled to be selected to facilitate this important document, and at the same time glad to join the efforts to carry out the task entrusted to us and produce the best possible outcome.

As co-facilitators, we were encouraged by the active and constructive engagement of all delegations throughout the informal consultation process. We would like to take this opportunity to thank delegations for having participated actively and positively in the consultations, and for their support and the spirit of cooperation and flexibility shown throughout the

process. We worked hard to accommodate the concerns of all delegations, with regard to the time frame as well as the substance of the process. Differing views were expressed during the negotiations, but we were convinced that the spirit of consensus would prevail and we acted accordingly. We are very glad that we have been able to reach a successful outcome and that consensus on the resolution has been achieved.

Finally, we would like to express our appreciation to our team for their tremendous efforts and hard work.

The Acting President: We have heard the last speaker in explanation of position.

I would like to express my sincere thanks to Ambassadors Alya Ahmed Saif Al-Thani of Qatar and Einar Gunnarsson of Iceland the co-facilitators of the informal consultations, who demonstrated great ability and patience in the conduct of the discussions and complex negotiations on resolution 72/305. I also thank member States for their valuable contributions to reaching an agreement on the resolution.

The General Assembly has thus concluded this stage of its consideration of agenda items 14 and 117.

Agenda item 7 (*continued*)

Organization of work, adoption of the agenda and allocation of items

The Acting President: The General Assembly will turn to a note by the Secretary-General contained in document A/72/101/Rev.1/Add.1 under sub-item (a) of agenda item 115, entitled "Appointment of members of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions".

Members will recall that the General Assembly concluded its consideration of sub-item (a) of agenda item 115 at its 55th plenary meeting, on 17 November 2017. In order for the Assembly to consider the document today, it will be necessary to reopen consideration of sub-item (a) of agenda item 115.

May I take it that it is the wish of the General Assembly to reopen consideration of sub-item (a) of agenda item 115?

It was so decided.

The Acting President: Members will recall that at its 2nd plenary meeting, on 15 September 2017, the General Assembly decided to allocate this sub-item to the Fifth Committee. To enable the Assembly to proceed expeditiously on the sub-item in this meeting, may I also take it that the Assembly wishes to consider sub-item (a) of agenda item 115 directly in plenary meeting and proceed immediately to its consideration?

It was so decided.

Agenda item 115 (*continued*)

Appointments to fill vacancies in subsidiary organs and other appointments

(a) Appointment of members of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions

Note by the Secretary-General (A/72/101/Rev.1/Add.1)

The Acting President: As indicated in document A/72/101/Rev.1/Add.1, the Secretary-General has received notification of the resignation of Mr. Takeshi Akamatsu of Japan from the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions, effective 15 August 2018. The Assembly will therefore be required to appoint, at its current session, a person to fill the vacancy for the remaining period of the term of office of Mr. Akamatsu, which expires on 31 December 2019.

As also indicated in document A/72/101/Rev.1/Add.1, the Government of Japan has nominated Mr. Takeshi Matsunaga to fill the vacancy arising from the resignation of Mr. Akamatsu.

The Secretariat was informed by the Chair of the Group of Asia-Pacific States that the candidature of Mr. Matsunaga has been endorsed by the Group. May I take it that it is the wish of the Assembly to appoint Mr. Takeshi Matsunaga of Japan as a member of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions, for a term of office beginning on 15 August 2018 and ending on 31 December 2019?

It was so decided.

The Acting President: May I take it that it is the wish of the General Assembly to conclude its consideration of sub-item (a) of agenda item 115?

It was so decided.

The meeting rose at 10.55 a.m.

United Nations A/72/PV.108

General Assembly
Seventy-second session

Official Records

108th plenary meeting
Tuesday, 24 July 2018, 10 a.m.
New York

President: Mr. Lajčák ..... (Slovakia)

In the absence of the President, Mr. Perera (Sri Lanka), Vice-President, took the Chair.

The meeting was called to order at 10.10 a.m.

Tribute to the memory of His Excellency Mr. Dante Maria Caputo, President of the General Assembly at its forty-third session

Tribute to the memory of His Excellency Mr. Theo-Ben Gurirab, President of the General Assembly at its fifty-fourth session

The Acting President: It is my sad duty to inform the members of the General Assembly of the passing, on 20 June, of His Excellency Mr. Dante Maria Caputo, President of the General Assembly at its forty-third session, and on 14 July of His Excellency Mr. Theo-Ben Gurirab, President of the General Assembly at its fifty-fourth session.

On behalf of the General Assembly, I should like to convey our deepest condolences to the Government and the people of Argentina and Namibia, respectively, and to the bereaved families of Mr. Caputo and Mr. Gurirab.

I shall now deliver a statement on behalf of the President of the General Assembly.

This morning we pay tribute to two stalwarts, His Excellency Mr. Dante Caputo of Argentina, President of the General Assembly at its forty-third session, and His Excellency Mr. Theo-Ben Gurirab of Namibia, President of the General Assembly at its fifty-fourth session. Both men served their countries as Ministers for Foreign Affairs before being elected to serve the General Assembly. They dedicated their public lives to diplomacy, and we are all very grateful.

Mr. Caputo became Foreign Minister of Argentina in 1983. During his tenure, he laid strong foundations for many multilateral initiatives that went on to benefit the region and the world. The Southern Common Market, the Rio Group and the Cartagena Group are prime examples. As a political scientist at heart, Minister Caputo's intellectual expertise would later benefit not only his native Argentina but also the wider global community. A true champion of peace, as President of the General Assembly Minister Caputo emphasized the importance of countries seeking a peaceful settlement of disputes and the role of the United Nations and its organs in promoting peace.

During Minister Caputo's tenure, the Assembly had on its agenda the item on the question of Namibia, on which Minister Gurirab also worked. For years as observer of the South West Africa People's Organization to the United Nations, Mr. Gurirab used his oratory and political mastery to advance the interests of the people of Namibia. He did so again as Foreign Minister in 1990, when Namibia gained independence.

A man of principle, integrity and great acumen, Minister Gurirab was elected to preside over the General Assembly at its fifty-fourth session, in 1999. He brought the highest standards to the office. During his tenure, the Assembly also had a very busy schedule, with three special sessions — on small island developing

This record contains the text of speeches delivered in English and of the translation of speeches delivered in other languages. Corrections should be submitted to the original languages only. They should be incorporated in a copy of the record and sent under the signature of a member of the delegation concerned to the Chief of the Verbatim Reporting Service, room U-0506 (verbatimrecords@un.org). Corrected records will be reissued electronically on the Official Document System of the United Nations (http://documents.un.org).

18-23651 (E)

Accessible document Please recycle

States, women, and social development — also being convened. He led with distinction.

They have gone before us and they have made their mark. They contributed greatly to our global endeavour to maintain peace, uphold human rights and promote justice and social progress. While we mourn their passing, we can preserve their legacy through our own actions and commitment to the cause of multilateralism and the United Nations. On behalf of the General Assembly, I wish to convey profound sympathies to their families and to the Governments and the peoples of Argentina and Namibia during this time of grief.

I now invite representatives to stand and observe a minute of silence in tribute to the memory of Mr. Dante Maria Caputo and Mr. Theo-Ben Gurirab, former Presidents of the General Assembly.

The members of the General Assembly observed a minute of silence.

The Acting President: In accordance with rule 70 of the rules of procedure of the General Assembly, I now give the floor to Ms. Maria Luiza Ribeiro Viotti, Chef de Cabinet of the Executive Office of the Secretary-General, to make a statement on behalf of the Secretary-General.

Ms. Viotti: On behalf of the Secretary-General, I join the General Assembly in sorrow at the recent loss of two distinguished members of the United Nations family, each a greatly admired public servant and each a former President of the General Assembly.

Dante Caputo, who passed away last month, will be remembered for his wide-ranging contributions to peace and democracy in his native Argentina and across Latin America and the Caribbean. His ties with the United Nations were productive and close. As Special Envoy of the Secretary-General for Haiti in the early 1990s, he facilitated the democratic transition in that country following decades of repressive rule.

As President of this organ at its forty-third session, he helped to guide the Assembly at a time of profound global change. Through his service as Argentina's Foreign Minister and with the Organization of American States, his voice was crucial in Latin America's own democratic transformation. Those contributions across a life of influential action and ideas form an important legacy.

Mr. Theo-Ben Gurirab, who died earlier this month, will be remembered as one of Namibia's founding fathers. His involvement with the United Nations dates back to the 1960s, when he received a United Nations fellowship to attend Temple University in the United States. It continued during his years as the observer of the South West Africa People's Organization at the United Nations.

After Namibia's independence, Mr. Gurirab returned to New York as President of the General Assembly at its fifty-fourth session and helped put causes such as the Millennium Development Goals on the global agenda. He also played an invaluable role in the adoption of the landmark Security Council resolution 1325 (2000), on women and peace and security. The United Nations was proud to stand with Namibia in its struggle for independence, and is grateful to have benefited from the work of Mr. Gurirab, who also served with great skill as his country's Minister for Foreign Affairs and as Prime Minister.

The careers of Dante Caputo and Theo-Ben Gurirab spanned roughly the same chapter in history. Both were committed to diplomacy, international cooperation and a rules-based global order, and both showed how the United Nations can bring about peaceful, positive change. We can honour their service by preserving and building on the achievements to which they dedicated their lives.

I express our profound gratitude for their contributions and offer condolences to their families, friends and all others touched by our great loss.

The Acting President: I now give the floor to the representative of Kenya, who will speak on behalf of the Group of African States.

Mr. Amayo (Kenya): I have the honour, on behalf of the Group of African States, to pay tribute to His Excellency Mr. Dante Caputo of Argentina, President of the General Assembly at its forty-third session, who passed away on 20 June. The late Mr. Caputo, who was a champion of democracy and human rights, respected dialogue and listened to everyone, regardless of their rank. The late Mr. Caputo was one of the significant promoters of the Rio Group, which called for joint and multilateral action by Latin American countries in order to preserve peace and democracy in South America. He also became one of the leaders of the Cartagena Group, whose objective was to encourage joint action

by indebted countries towards creditors in order to ease their debt burden.

Today we celebrate his life of commitment and democracy, which was demonstrated by his bravery during a period in Argentina when it was not easy to take such a stand. As the Argentine Minister for Foreign Affairs, he helped shepherd the 1984 Treaty of Peace and Friendship between Chile and Argentina. The African Group pays tribute to this great son of Argentina for standing for, and defending the ideals of, peace and democracy. We stand together with our Argentine brothers and sisters to celebrate a life well lived by a man who reminds all of us what it means to be brave and visionary. We shall continue to honour his memory by recommitting to the ideals that he cultivated, including equity among nations for the purposes of development and the alleviation of poverty.

Allow me now to pay tribute, on behalf of the African Group, to the late President of the General Assembly Mr. Gurirab.

I have the honour, on behalf of the African Group, to pay tribute to a fallen son of Africa who dedicated his life to fighting injustice, racism and violent oppression. The late Mr. Gurirab was a peacemaker and freedom fighter who became one of Africa's best diplomats owing to his negotiation and conflict-resolution skills, which led him to serve for 14 years as the chief observer of the South West Africa People's Organization (SWAPO) to the United Nations, and later as its Permanent Observer. From 1986 to 1990, he served as SWAPO's Secretary for Foreign Affairs and played a major part in the negotiations leading to Namibia's independence. The late Mr. Gurirab brought the struggle of the Namibian people to the attention of the international community and played a key role in the protracted negotiations that produced Security Council resolution 435 (1978), which contained an internationally accepted plan to bring independence to Namibia.

As the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Namibia, the late Mr. Gurirab led three years of negotiations over Walvis Bay, which resulted in its reintegration and that of the off-shore islands into Namibia in 1994, in fulfilment of Security Council resolution 432 (1978). The late Mr. Gurirab cared deeply about his country, Namibia, and the continent of Africa. He returned home in 1989 to help organize pre-independence elections, and was one of the leading SWAPO negotiators of the ceasefire agreement signed in 1989 between South Africa's apartheid regime and SWAPO. That set the stage for elections in Namibia and its transition to independence. The late Mr. Gurirab also served as a member of the Constituent Assembly, which drafted the Namibian Constitution, and is credited as one of the leading figures who helped set Namibia's foreign policy trajectory.

The late Mr. Gurirab worked tirelessly to promote regional and subregional cooperation and, in 1995, represented Namibia on the bureau of the Organization of African Unity (OAU) Council of Ministers. That year, as the Council's first Vice-Chair, he presided over the first extraordinary session of the central organ of the OAU for the prevention, management and resolution of conflicts.

The late Mr. Gurirab was elected in 1999 to preside over the General Assembly at its fifty-fourth session. The leadership he provided during his tenure led to the establishment of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). Africa honours the late Mr. Gurirab for his great contribution to the realization of self-determination for Namibia, which was Africa's struggle. He dedicated his life to promoting peace and fighting for the human rights of the Namibian people. The history of Africa is one of struggle for independence and our heroes of the African liberation movement cannot be counted without mentioning Mr. Gurirab. We pay tribute to him as a hero who will be remembered in African history as a freedom fighter, a peacemaker and a consummate diplomat.

In conclusion, to honour his life and legacy, we commit to the implementation of the development agenda to complete the unfinished business of the MDGs, succeeded now by the Sustainable Development Goals, and to teach future generations and generals to live up to the ideals of peace, respect for human rights and the protection of the freedom that was earned through the sacrifice of heroes such as the late Mr. Gurirab.

The Acting President: I now give the floor to the representative of Singapore, who will speak on behalf of the Group of Asia-Pacific States.

Ms. Tang (Singapore): I have the honour to deliver this statement on behalf of the Group of Asia-Pacific States to remember and pay tribute to His Excellency Mr. Dante Maria Caputo, President of the General Assembly at its forty-third session.

During his lifetime, Mr. Dante Caputo served his country and the international community in many ways. He was Argentina's Minister for Foreign Affairs from 1983 to 1989. During that time, he signed the 1984 Treaty of Peace and Friendship with Chile, which ended the Beagle Channel conflict. He was a leader of the Contadora support group, a predecessor of the Rio Group. He was also one of the leaders of the Cartagena Group and played a key role in laying the foundation for the Southern Common Market.

The year that Mr. Caputo served the General Assembly as President during its forty-third session was a remarkable one for multilateralism and the United Nations. During that year, there were agreements reached to end the war in Afghanistan and to establish a ceasefire between Iran and Iraq. In December of that year, an agreement was also reached to usher in Namibia's transition to independence. The United Nations Peacekeeping Force was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize in recognition of its contributions to peacekeeping. The prestige of the United Nations had never been greater.

Even so, as he passed the baton following his term, we were all aware that the successive peace and multilateralism remained fragile. Mr. Caputo understood that. He understood that, to survive and prosper, multilateralism needs its champions. Multilateralism and the persistence of the international order requires continued effort from us all. In that respect, Mr. Caputo continued to serve the international community throughout his lifetime, taking up roles as Special Envoy for the United Nations and in the United Nations Development Programme.

In remembering his life today, the Asia-Pacific Group pays tribute to Mr. Caputo's work for his country, his region and the international community. He was a true son of Argentina, who did his country proud and upheld the cause of multilateralism and the international rules-based system. As we approach the closure of the seventy-second session, let us continue his legacy and work in the spirit of cooperation and consensus, in the common understanding that we are all stronger together than we are apart.

I now have the honour to deliver this statement on behalf of the Group of Asia-Pacific States and to extend our deepest condolences to the family of Theo-Ben Gurirab, as well as to the Government and the people of Namibia, on the passing of a giant in Namibia's history.

Mr. Gurirab was one of the founding fathers of Namibia and devoted his life to the liberation of his nation and the anti-apartheid struggle. He spent 27 years in political exile, and his tireless efforts as the chief representative and subsequently Permanent Observer of the South West Africa People's Organization (SWAPO) to the United Nations, followed by his role as SWAPO Secretary for Foreign Affairs, placed the struggle of the Namibian people for self-determination in the international spotlight. His efforts were central in laying the groundwork for an independent Namibia. Mr. Gurirab also played vital roles, as the key drafter of Namibia's Constitution, in helping to organize pre-independence elections and in negotiating the ceasefire agreement between South Africa's apartheid regime and SWAPO in 1989.

Following Namibia's hard-won independence, in March 1990, Mr. Gurirab served as the new nation's first Minister for Foreign Affairs and was a prime architect of Namibia's diplomacy. It was during that period that he concurrently served as the President of General Assembly for its fifty-fourth session. During his tenure as President of the General Assembly, he oversaw the successful Millennium Summit of world leaders, during which the historic Millennium Declaration was adopted. It was through that milestone Declaration that the community of nations committed to a new global partnership to reduce extreme poverty and set out the Millennium Development Goals, the precursor to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Sustainable Development Goals.

Mr. Gurirab also played an important role in the adoption of Security Council resolution 1325 (2000), on women and peace and security. Mr. Gurirab went on to serve his country honourably as Prime Minister, and subsequently as Speaker of the National Assembly, until his retirement from public office. Mr. Gurirab's enduring commitment to justice, solidarity and self-determination, as well as multilateralism and the rule of law will continue to inspire us all. We honour the indelible legacy he left for Namibia, the African continent and the international community.

The Acting President: I now give the floor to the representative of the Czech Republic, who will speak on behalf of the Group of Eastern European States.

Mrs. Chatardova (Czech Republic): I have the honour to take the floor on behalf of the Group of Eastern European States.

It is with sadness that we received the news of the passing of His Excellency Mr. Dante Maria Caputo, President of the General Assembly at its forty-third session, and His Excellency Mr. Theo-Ben Gurirab, President of the General Assembly at its fifty-fourth session. On behalf of the members of the Group of Eastern European States, I would like to express our deepest condolences to the families and friends, as well as the the Governments and the peoples of Argentina and Namibia.

Mr. Caputo dedicated many years of his professional career to being a diplomat and politician in the service of the people of Argentina, the United Nations and the Organization of American States (OAS). In the words of His Excellency Mr. Jorge Faurie, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Argentina,

> "Mr. Caputo was the first Foreign Minister when democracy was restored, and that gives him an important role in Argentina's history. He was a man who was committed to human rights, who respected dialogue and dissent and who listened to everyone, regardless of their rank or hierarchy."

After serving as the Foreign Minister from 1983 to 1989, Mr. Caputo was elected to the Chamber of Deputies and served as Vice-President of the Foreign Affairs Committee. In 1992, Mr. Caputo represented the OAS and the United Nations in Haiti as Special Envoy. In 1993, he was appointed the Special Representative of the United Nations Secretary-General to Haiti and negotiated an agreement to allow for the democratic transition on the island. From 2001 to 2004, he directed the regional project on democratic development in Latin America of the United Nations Development Programme. He also held various positions at the OAS, including Secretary for Political Affairs.

Mr. Gurirab, President of the General Assembly at its fifty-fourth session, was regarded as one of the founding fathers of the independent Republic of Namibia, one of the principal architects of Namibia's diplomacy and a stalwart of the anti-apartheid and freedom struggle. He was the country's first Minister for Foreign Affairs, from 1990 to 2002, and subsequently served as the second Prime Minister of Namibia from 2002 to 2005. He was one of the key drafters of the Namibian Constitution and contributed immensely to the drafting of new laws for independent Namibia.

From 1990 to 2015, he was a member of the National Assembly of Namibia, while from 2005 to 2015 he served as the Speaker of the Assembly. During that term, namely, from 2008 to 2011, Mr. Gurirab also held the position of President of the Inter-Parliamentary Union. Among Mr. Gurirab's achievements at the United Nations was the chairing of the negotiations that brought about the reintegration of Walvis Bay into Namibian territory, in fulfilment of Security Council resolution 432 (1978).

Our thoughts and sympathies are with the family and friends of Mr. Caputo and Mr. Gurirab. May they rest in peace.

The Acting President: I now give the floor to the representative of Antigua and Barbuda, who will speak on behalf of the Group of Latin American and Caribbean States.

Mr. Webson (Antigua and Barbuda): I have the sad duty to deliver this statement on behalf of the Group of Latin American and Caribbean States in tribute to His Excellency the late Mr. Dante Maria Caputo, President of the General Assembly at its forty-third session, who passed on 20 June. Mr. Caputo represented the developing world and our regional Group of Latin American and the Caribbean States with great pride.

Mr. Caputo was the former Foreign Minister of his native Argentina and was also known as a dedicated professor, a sharp and meticulous diplomat and a passionate political leader. He is widely remembered in Argentina for rebuilding the prestige of Argentine diplomacy and achieving the reintegration of the country into the world after several years of international tension.

He is also known for his work on the South American integration movement, the birth of the Southern Common Market and the Treaty of Peace and Friendship with Chile. As President of the General Assembly, Mr. Caputo took immense care in trying to address the widening gap of inequality and wealth between the developed and developing countries.

After his tenure as President of the General Assembly, he never ceased in his service to the international community. He represented the United Nations and the Organization of American States (OAS) in peace missions in Haiti, which led to the restoration of democracy in the country. In recent years, Mr. Caputo worked in several international organizations. From 2001 to 2004 he was a project director for the United Nations Development Programme, and between 2006

and 2009 he was the Secretary of Political Affairs of the OAS.

The Group of Latin American and Caribbean States expresses its solidarity and sincere condolences to the family of Mr. Caputo and to the Government and the people of Argentina during these difficult times of national grief. The Group also wishes to remind us all, as international civil servants, to not only use this occasion to pay homage to that outstanding diplomat from the developing world, who dedicated his life to service not only to Argentina but also to the world, but also to use this occasion to recommit ourselves to fulfilling the indelible work in ensuring the provision of a safer, more secure and unified world.

I now turn to our tribute to His Excellency Mr. Theo-Ben Gurirab. I have the sad duty, once again, to deliver this statement on behalf of the members of the Group of Latin American and Caribbean States in tribute to the late Mr. Theo-Ben Gurirab, President of the General Assembly at its fifty-fourth session, who passed away on 14 July.

Mr. Gurirab represented the developing world with distinction and was the son of the African region. His Excellency Mr. Theo-Ben Gurirab is being recalled as a prominent politician in his home country of Namibia and is considered one of the architects of the country's independence in the fight for freedom from colonialism for the independence of his people. Mr. Gurirab's persistence and insistence that freedom and justice belong to every human being provided him with the moral armour to serve his country in several positions, namely, Minister for Foreign Affairs from 1990 to 2002, Prime Minister from 2002 to 2005 and Speaker of the National Assembly from 2005 to 2015.

Mr. Gurirab was elected President of the General Assembly at its fifty-fourth session in 1999. During his presidency of the General Assembly, he was instrumental in the work of conceiving the Millennium Development Goals, the forerunner to today's Sustainable Development Goals. Under his stewardship, Heads of States and Governments for the first time formally recognized the importance of interaction and engagement among the United Nations, national parliaments and the Inter-Parliamentary Union, which he also headed.

The Group of Latin American and Caribbean States expresses its condolences and sincere solidarity to the family of Mr. Gurirab and to the Government and people of Namibia. We express our heartfelt sympathy for the last of the freedom fighters. The Group also wishes to remind us all that in honouring the life of that great leader, we can do so by recommitting ourselves to fostering a better environment for international peace, diplomacy and development.

May their souls both rest in peace and may our world continue in the fight that they have left us.

The Acting President: I now give the floor to the representative of Luxembourg, who will speak on behalf of the Group of Western European and other States.

Mr. Braun (Luxembourg) (*spoke in French*): In a sad coincidence, I address the General Assembly today to pay homage to two former Presidents of the General Assembly.

It is with profound sadness that we have learned of the passing of Mr. Dante Maria Caputo, former President of the General Assembly. He will be remembered for his outstanding diplomatic career and his commitment to peace, democracy, human rights and regional cooperation.

Former Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Argentine Republic from 1983 to 1989, Dante Caputo contributed significantly to the preservation of peace and the strengthening of democracy in Latin America, and in particular in his own country after the end of the dictatorship. He was one of the founding fathers of the Southern Common Market and a major supporter of the Contadora Support Group.

Mr. Caputo guided with confidence and finesse the work of the General Assembly as President during its forty-third session, at a key moment at the end of the Cold War, marked by major geopolitical changes. He pursued his work in the service of our Organization, first as the Special Envoy and later as Special Representative of the Secretary-General in Haiti. In his functions as director of the regional programme for democratic development in Latin America of the United Nations Development Programme, he could rely on his experince in his national capacity for the sometimes difficult reconciliation among Latin American States.

I extend my condolences, in the name of the Group of Western European and other States, to the people and the Government of Argentina, and foremost to his family and friends, whom we know are many.

Today I would also like to pay tribute to another former President of the General Assembly, Mr. Theo-Ben Gurirab. He will be remembered as a politician and diplomat whose exceptional commitment to the independence of his country and respect for human rights is undeniable.

As a member of the South West African People's Organization, Mr. Gurirab held the position of its observer to the United Nations for 14 years. During that period, he contributed significantly to the historic struggle for independence of his country. He played a major role in the process leading to the adoption of Security Council resolution 435 (1978), which opened the door to the independence of his country. As a member of the Constitutional Assembly, was able to crown his previous efforts on becoming the key penholder during the drafting of the Constitution of the Republic of Namibia. After independence, he served in the most prestigious of functions of his country.

Mr. Gurirab presided over the fifty-fourth session of the General Assembly at a pivotal moment in history during the preparations for the United Nations Millennium Summit in 2000 and the establishment of the Millennium Development Goals. His work therefore largely contributed to adapting our Organization to the strategic challenges of the twenty-first century. He was also a leader in the adoption of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, which now serves as our guide. As President, and later as Honorary President of the Inter-Parliamentary Union, Mr. Gurirab contributed to the shaping of democratic awareness in multilateral institutions. I need not recall how important that is in our world today.

I offer my condolences, in the name of the Western European and other States Group, to the people and the Government of the Republic of Namibia, and especially to his family and his friends, whom we know are inconsolable. Our thoughts are with them during this time of sorrow. Our thoughts are with all of the friends and families of Mr. Dante Caputo and Mr. Theo-Ben Gurirab.

The Acting President: I now give the floor to the representative of the United States of America, who will speak on behalf of the host country.

Ms. Amadeo (United States of America): On behalf of the United States, I wish to express my sincere condolences to the people of the Argentine Republic regarding the passing of Mr. Dante Maria Caputo, former Argentine Foreign Minister and President of the General Assembly at its forty-third session.

Dante Caputo was a driven and passionate diplomat, an educator and a lifetime public servant. He was devoted to serving the Argentine people and tirelessly campaigned for the restoration of democracy to Argentina, until it was achieved. His bravery earned him the well-deserved role as Argentina's first Foreign Minister after the return of democracy. His efforts were vital in establishing democratic institutions in his country and bringing his people to peace by dismantling the seven-year military dictatorship. He promoted freedom and democracy at a time when it was not easy. He showed us that ideas, and even action, are not enough, but rather that those ideals need to be framed in institutions and Government.

He was a man who was committed to human rights, and who promoted dialogue and discussion in the face of disagreement. He pushed for accountability for those found guilty of human rights violations in the Argentine military. He was vital in the signing of the Treaty of Peace and Friendship with Chile, successfully ending conflict between the two countries over the Beagle Channel. The questions we face today — on how to uphold human rights in an evolving security space or to promote justice — do not have easy answers. Mr. Caputo showed us that we can instil change, as impossible as it may seem.

Mr. Caputo was a great partner for the United States. He helped improve the partnership between our two countries. We have since formed a counter-narcotics partnership and gained an important security ally. Relations between the United States and Argentina are stronger now than ever before.

The world stage welcomed Mr. Caputo here in New York as the President of the General Assembly at its forty-third session. He was a leader on international development, a strong advocate against racial discrimination and an activist for greater cooperation between developed and developing nations. Today we not only mourn his loss, but also recognize him for his dedication and leadership in the fight to promote democracy and human rights around the world.

The passing of Dante Caputo is a devastating loss for the entire international community. May God bless the memory of Dante Caputo and the people of Argentina.

On behalf of the United States, I wish to express my sincere condolences to the Government and the people of the Republic of Namibia on the death of Mr. Theo-Ben Gurirab. Mr. Gurirab was a seasoned diplomat, a negotiator and a leader. He envisioned an independent Namibia, united across ethnic groups, with a democracy that would give Namibians academic and economic opportunities.

The United States and our United Nations community have known Mr. Gurirab since he was young. His dedication earned him a United Nations Fellowship to study in the United States at Temple University in Pennsylvania. He graduated with a degree in political science and quickly took up the torch of his nation's liberation movement, the South West African People's Organization, working as its associate representative at the United Nations in New York for eight years.

Then, for 14 years, Mr. Gurirab was devoted to the independence movement's delegation at the United Nations. Through his hard work and devotion, Security Council resolution 435 (1978) was adopted, calling for a ceasefire between the independence movement and South Africa. That resolution also established the United Nations Transition Assistance Group, which oversaw elections, South Africa's eventual withdrawal and, ultimately, Namibian independence. As a member of Namibia's Constituent Assembly, Mr. Gurirab helped draft Namibia's Constitution, which is the basis of democratic Namibia. Mr. Gurirab taught us the power of dedication and action. His efforts shed light on the important role of the United Nations, and of the Security Council, in advancing peace and security around the world.

In addition to being Namibia's first Foreign Minister, Mr. Gurirab also served as President of the General Assembly at its fifty-fourth session. From a student-in-exile who received a United Nations study fellowship, to serving as a chief negotiator for a United Nations-mediated conflict, Mr. Gurirab showed us that persistence and faith could unite the international community. His leadership in the General Assembly is a testament to his dedication to diplomacy and international relations.

Mr. Gurirab was an optimist and idealist, but for him ideas were never enough. He worked for three decades to achieve the independence of his homeland, and as Namibia became independent he helped create an enduring democratic structure for future generations. He quickly raised the profile of his young nation on the global stage and forged strong relationships, including with the United States.

Mr. Gurirab will be remembered as a founding father of Namibia and a global leader. His contributions to the creation of an independent and democratic Namibia will be enjoyed by Namibians for generations to come. May God bless the memory of Mr. Gurirab and the people of Namibia.

The Acting President: I now give the floor to the representative of Argentina.

Mr. García Moritán (Argentina) (*spoke in Spanish*): At the outset, I would like to express my profound appreciation for the heartfelt words of those who preceded me, including the Vice-President of the General Assembly, the Chef de Cabinet to the Secretary-General, all of the Chairs of the regional groups and, of course, the United States of America as the host country.

It is an honour for me to deliver this statement in memory of Dante Maria Caputo, Argentine Minister for Foreign Affairs from the democratic recovery in 1983 until 1989 and President of the General Assembly at its forty-third session, among the other high positions he held in the international arena throughout his outstanding and impeccable career.

To remember Dante Caputo in this Hall is to remember him with great emotion and pride. He embodied before the world the recovery of democracy and the commitment to the struggle for human rights in Argentina, and during his tenure, he outlined some of the foreign policy guidelines that continue to set the course for my country's actions in the world today. His commitment to human rights, freedom and the defence of institutions was exemplary and inspired generations of Argentine diplomats and politicians.

As he said in his address to the general debate of the Assembly during its forty-first session,

> "We the Argentine people believe in the possibility and need for peace ... based upon truth, justice and freedom for all, without exception. ... Our presentation is essentially political. ... We believe in peace as a true formula for coexistence, in equality as a predicate of action towards the common welfare, in development as a focus for the energies of men and women to build a new society. We have no other weapons than our minds.

> ... We prefer a world in which people can coexist peacefully and freely, not in submission or under oppression." (*A/41/PV.5, pp. 99-104*)

Dante Caputo was also a strong advocate and promoter of dialogue and understanding among people, as well as integration. He has been described as an architect of consensus and compromise, with an unstoppable desire to unite what others separated and to bring together those who thought differently. His work and leadership were instrumental in concluding the Treaty of Peace and Friendship between Chile and Argentina, and his efforts towards integration among Argentina, Uruguay and Brazil laid the foundation for the creation of the Southern Common Market.

As a faithful exponent of the region, Dante Caputo embodied Latin America and the Caribbean's commitment to peace and democracy, and in that regard actively participated in the Contadora Support Group, later called the Rio Group, to promote peace in Central America. Moreover, he was one of the promoters of the Cartagena Group, with the objective of the indebted countries taking action against the foreign debt creditors.

As President of the General Assembly, Mr. Caputo was responsible for presiding over this forum at a time when the world was beginning to undergo a transition into a period of profound changes in the international order and power relations among States. He served during the tenure of His Excellency Mr. Javier Pérez de Cuéllar as Secretary-General, and both embodied the values and professionalism of Latin America at the helm of the Organization.

During Caputo's tenure as President, the Assembly made progress on issues related to the maintenance of international peace and security, the defence and promotion of human rights and fundamental freedoms and economic development with equality. After completing his term as President of the General Assembly and Foreign Minister of the Argentine Republic, Dante Caputo continued to work actively in the international arena for peace, democracy and human rights as Special Envoy of the Secretary-General for Haiti from 1992 to 1994, and subsequently as Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Haiti and Head of the United Nations Mission in Haiti from 1993 to 1994. He was also appointed Special Envoy of the Organization of American States for Haiti in 1993. In that context, he helped conclude the Governors Island Agreement, which made the democratic transition and the beginning of national reconciliation possible in Haiti.

In conclusion, on behalf of the Government and the people of Argentina, I would like to extend our sincere condolences to the family of Dante Caputo, who has undoubtedly left an indelible mark on the memory and future of our country, region and the entire world. We will be eternally grateful for having had such an excellent exponent of the values that unite us as an international community.

Lastly, let me also say a few words in memory of Theo-Ben Gurirab, who was President of the General Assembly at its fifty-fourth session, while representing his country Namibia. He stood out for laying the groundwork for the formulation of the Millennium Development Goals and for fostering interaction between the United Nations and parliaments around the world. We extend sincere condolences to the Government and the people of Namibia, as well as to the entire African continent, on the loss of one of the founding fathers of that nation and a true leader.

The Acting President: I now give the floor to the representative of Namibia.

Mr. Gertze (Namibia): I join all those who have spoken before me in expressing the heartfelt sympathy of the Government and the people of Namibia on the passing of Minister Caputo of Argentina. He worked hand in glove with the late Theo-Ben Gurirab in the corridors of the United Nations, sharing the same aspirations and objectives in the fight for liberty, justice and freedom. He became Foreign Minister at a time when Mr. Theo-Ben Gurirab was Foreign Minister. He shared his understanding and knowledge with Javier Pérez de Cuéllar and oversaw the implementation of Security Council resolution 435 (1978) for Namibia. We extend our deepest condolences to the bereaved family of the late Minister Caputo and to the entire bereaved nation of Argentina.

Today we are gathered here to pay tribute to one of the legends, and indeed a hero of Namibia's liberation struggle, and one of Africa's and, dare I say, one of the world's finest diplomats. He grew up in the rural village of Usakos, in my country, Namibia, and rose to become a distinguished global citizen and statesman — a champion of freedom, democracy, peace, human rights, the right to self-determination and independence.

On behalf of the bereaved Gurirab family, the Government and the people of Namibia, I wish to express our heartfelt gratitude to you, Sir, and to all our colleagues for your invaluable support in honouring an outstanding son of the Namibian soil. He was truly an extraordinary representative of the values and principles upon which our international parliament of the people, the United Nations, was founded. It was here among diplomats from around the world that he stood up and raised his voice against racial oppression and injustice and apartheid colonialism and demanded liberty, justice and freedom for people all over the world fighting to liberate their countries from the shackles of colonialism. It was here where his journey as fearless defender of human rights and independence for the people of his beloved Namibia found its way into the corridors of the United Nations and onto the international stage. It was here where his close friend and comrade Mr. Hage Geingob, now President of the Republic of Namibia, handed the reigns to him to take charge as the top diplomat of the South West African People's Organization (SWAPO) at the United Nations in 1972. It was here, nearly 50 years ago, that his remarkable journey into the world of diplomacy begun.

I thank the members of the Assembly from the bottom of my heart for taking the time to be with us today as we pay tribute to the late Honourable Mr. Theo-Ben Gurirab. In his departure, Namibia has lost a son, Africa has lost a visionary and the world has lost a great leader. As we bid farewell to one of the legends of Namibia's liberation struggle, we honour the legacy of an outstanding representative of the people, who distinguished himself as a skilful, talented, sharp and eloquent negotiator. He was known as a Pan-Africanist at heart, who always reminded us of the vision of the founders of the Organization of African Unity, now the African Union.

Here at the United Nations and in other international forums, he was known for his toughness in negotiations, but because of his ever-present gentleness he was simply and affectionately referred to as Ben. It is funny how I am able to say that only now that he cannot hear me, for it would never have left my lips to address him in such an informal manner. He was my Minister, Prime Minister and Speaker — never would I have dared to call him Ben, as he was referred to here in the halls of the United Nations.

Over the past week since his demise, we have heard numerous accolades and heart-warming tributes about this remarkable son of the Namibian soil. The central message was, is and will remain that Theo-Ben Gurirab has left an indelible mark as a highly intelligent, fiery but compassionate diplomat. He was a man of unbelievable charm, generally soft-spoken with captivating oratory skills.

Mr. Theo-Ben Gurirab was in no small measure an intellectual giant. He was a man with a deep passion for the art and purpose of the diplomatic profession; intoxicated with a desire to seek peaceful settlement of conflicts. He was a skilful negotiator who was committed to the pursuit of justice for the disenfranchised, with a strong conviction that win-win solutions would have long-lasting impact. Without exception, Mr. Theo-Ben Gurirab has been hailed as a consummate diplomat, one of the principal architects of Namibia's diplomatic prowess, anti-apartheid and tireless freedom fighter, towering figure of Namibia's diplomacy, a stalwart of the struggle for Namibia's independence, as well as a great proponent of African pride and identity.

Mr. Gurirab arrived in the United States in 1963, upon being awarded a United Nations Fellowship. He attended Temple University in Pennsylvania, where he obtained a Bachelor of Arts degree in political science. He completed advanced post-graduate studies in international relations in 1971. In 1964 he was appointed, along with His Excellency Mr. Hage G. Geingob and the late Hidipo Hamutenya, as one of SWAPO's troika of associate representatives to the United Nations and the Americas, serving in that capacity while simultaneously pursuing their education.

As a seasoned diplomat and negotiator, Mr. Gurirab served as SWAPO's chief observer at the United Nations for 14 years, during which time he successfully led the campaign that resulted in the General Assembly adopting resolution 3111 (XXVIII) on 12 December 1973, granting SWAPO observer status as the authentic representative of the Namibian people and recognizing the South West Africa People's Organization in 1976 as the sole and authentic representative of the Namibian people. Under his able stewardship here at the United Nations, Mr. Gurirab succeeded in making the case for Namibia's independence when a plan for the independence of the territory was unanimously adopted by way of Security Council resolution 385 (1976), of 30 January 1976, demanding free and fair elections in Namibia, under the supervision and control of the United Nations.

Over the 14 years of his stewardship as SWAPO's top diplomat at the United Nations from 1972 to 1986, the Organization's political and diplomatic status grew from that of a petitioner on the sidelines of diplomacy to a mainstream negotiator and participant in the international arena. Through his efforts Mr. Gurirab turned the struggle of the Namibian people into a celebrated cause of the international community. The protracted negotiations that produced Security Council resolution 435 (1978), which contained an internationally accepted plan to bring independence to Namibia, represented one of the high points in his political career.

Following Namibia's independence, Mr. Gurirab held the positions of Foreign Minister from 1990 to 2002, Prime Minister from 2002 to 2005 and Speaker of the National Assembly until his retirement in March 2015. He also served as President of the Inter-Parliamentary Union from 2008 to 2011.

Mr. Gurirab will be remembered for his role as President of the General Assembly at its fifty-fourth session, from 1999 to 2000, when he presided over the Millennium Summit of the United Nations. He had the distinct and singular honour of presiding over the General Assembly as it transitioned from the twentieth century into the twenty-first century from 1999 to 2000. Without question, I would say that that was a once-in-a-lifetime privilege.

Over more than 35 years in the field of international affairs and diplomacy, Mr. Gurirab knew and worked with three generations of world leaders and five Secretaries-General of the United Nations. He devoted his life to the liberation of his country. Throughout his extraordinary journey through life, he remained a man of the people, a firm believer in the power of education and knowledge and an advocate for equal rights and for the advancement of women and young people in society. He was an avid reader, a historian, a philosopher, a compassionate and dedicated family man, a friend of the arts and culture, a diplomat par excellence and, above all, a distinguished gentleman.

On a personal note, I had the privilege to know and to work with that extraordinary man for the entire 28 years of my career in the foreign service of our country. I remember him as one of the most eloquent and passionate diplomats. He was painfully precise, especially in his use of vocabulary and in his writings. At the same time, he was able to sit and talk with anyone and to fit in with anyone at their level. He was at ease with world leaders, academics and superstars and with his staff — in fact, with anyone. There is no doubt that he was an icon for many of us in the diplomatic world, particularly those of us who had the privilege to work closely with him.

In conclusion, allow me to share with members a few lines of my personal message to him. The plan has set, and the time to bid you farewell has dawned on us. For you, honourable TBG — as I affectionately used to call him — the journey into eternity has just begun. We salute you and will forever be grateful for your legendary example of service and of hard work and for your sacrifices and immeasurable support and selflessness. Farewell my dear teacher, mentor, icon of Namibia's extraordinary diplomatic finesse, internationalist, distinguished orator and gentle giant. Until we meet again, may your soul rest in perfect peace.

The Acting President: That concludes the tributes paid to two former Presidents of the General Assembly, namely, the late Mr. Caputo and Mr. Gurirab.

Agenda item 14 (*continued*)

Integrated and coordinated implementation of and follow-up to the outcomes of the major United Nations conferences and summits in the economic, social and related fields

Draft resolution (A/72/L.63)

The Acting President: I now give the floor to the representative of Ecuador to introduce draft resolution A/72/L.63.

Mr. Cadena Duarte (Ecuador) (*spoke in Spanish*): I am pleased to introduce draft resolution A/72/L.63 entitled "Implementation of the United Nations Decade of Action on Nutrition (2016–2025)".

In its nine preambular and six operative paragraphs, this succinct but significant draft resolution seeks to increase the political relevance of the implementation of activities in the context of the work programme of the Decade. Among its sources of information, it is worth mentioning the report of the Secretary-General (A/72/829) and the 2017 report *The State of Food Security and Nutrition in the World*, compiled by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD), UNICEF, the

World Food Programme (WFP) and the World Health Organization (WHO).

The Government of Ecuador notes with deep concern that the 2017 report indicates that the number of people suffering from chronic undernourishment throughout the world increased to 815 million in 2016, as compared to 777 million in 2015. Also, while the prevalence of chronic childhood malnutrition decreased from 29.5 per cent to 22.9 per cent between 2005 and 2016, 155 million children under the age of five years are still affected by that malady — a clear reflection that we are far from eradicating hunger and malnutrition.

We welcome the reference in the draft resolution to the importance of promoting sustainable farming and agriculture in order to eradicate hunger and malnutrition and to the contribution that family farming and smallholder farming can make to that end.

The draft resolution recognizes that women are often more affected by food insecurity than men in every region of the world, that almost one third of women of reproductive age worldwide suffer from anaemia and that wasting, undernutrition, overweight and obesity are recurrent problems that affect children in several countries are of the greatest importance and require the commitment of all to deal with them.

The document reiterates the call on Governments, United Nations agencies, other international and regional organizations, civil society, the private sector and academic institutions to make ambitious commitments with a view to strengthening efforts and scaling up activities under the work programme of the Decade, as well as our appeal to FAO and WHO to redouble efforts in continuing to lead the activities of the work programme, in collaboration with WFP, IFAD and UNICEF and in consultation with other organizations and platforms, together with the reference to convening open and inclusive dialogues at the midterm evaluation of the Decade and at the end of it in order to build on the initiatives of Governments and their partners.

Finally, as facilitator of the informal consultations, Ecuador expresses its gratitude to the delegations that actively participated in the discussion on the text before us, as well as for the technical support during consultations by the representatives of the offices of FAO and WHO. We reiterate our appreciation to the Permanent Missions of Guinea, Samoa, Senegal and Tunisia for the early sponsorship of the draft resolution, and we thank the 19 States that by 9 o'clock today had decided to sponsor it. We invite other delegations to sponsor the document, which is the result of a multilateral exercise in mutual benefit.

The Acting President: We shall now proceed to consider draft resolution A/72/L.63, entitled "Implementation of the United Nations Decade of Action on Nutrition (2016-2025)".

I now give the floor to the representative of the Secretariat.

Ms. Pollard (Department for General Assembly and Conference Management): I should like to announce that, since the submission of the draft resolution, and in addition to those delegations listed in the document, the following countries have also become sponsors of draft resolution A/72/L.63: Brazil, China, Colombia, Costa Rica, the Dominican Republic, El Salvador, Equatorial Guinea, Estonia, Germany, Guatemala, India, Indonesia, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Myanmar, Palau, the Russian Federation, Singapore, Slovenia, Thailand, Turkey, Ukraine, the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela and Viet Nam.

The Acting President: May I take it that the Assembly decides to adopt draft resolution A/72/L.63?

Draft resolution A/72/L.63 was adopted (resolution 72/306).

The Acting President: Before giving the floor to speakers in explanation of vote, may I remind delegations that explanations of vote are limited to 10 minutes and should be made by delegations from their seats.

Mr. Bagwell (United States of America): While we joined the consensus on resolution 72/306, entitled "Implementation of the United Nations Decade of Action on Nutrition (2016-2025)", we would like to make reference to our prior statements containing points of clarification on language related to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. We once again underscore that the 2030 Agenda is non-binding, does not create or affect rights or obligations under international law and does it create any new financial commitments.

We previously provided an explanation of the United States position on this matter in the General Assembly on 12 June following the adoption of resolution 72/281, under agenda item 14 (see A/72/PV.95).

Mr. Cadena Duarte (Ecuador) (*spoke in Spanish*): The General Assembly's adoption of resolution 72/306,

entitled "Implementation of the United Nations Decade of Action on Nutrition (2016-2025)", sends a clear message of optimism.

The Government of Ecuador promotes healthy food practices and assistance for the development of the agricultural sector as mechanisms to ensure a decent life for the population. Reducing the prevalence of chronic malnutrition and investing in new technologies for agricultural production are priority areas for action. Early childhood care, with an emphasis on the first 1,000 days of life, is one of our main challenges. Our public policies focus on reducing chronic malnutrition in children between the ages of 2 and 5, while encouraging only breastfeeding during the first six months of life. At the same time, we face pressing problems of obesity and overweight in children aged five to 11, the prevalence of which was more than 31 per cent in 2014.

We have made significant progress in Ecuador in measuring average household food consumption, which is essential for analysis and action. Our goal is to ensure that more and more households have the means to access foodstuffs such as grains, meat and dairy products, which are necessary to guarantee an adequate caloric intake. The main cause of hunger in the world is poverty.

Ecuador presented its intersectoral food and nutrition plan last February. The plan, which covers the period 2018-2025, aims at ensuring adequate nutrition throughout a person's life and comprehensive care, as well as the setting up of mechanisms for shared responsibility among all levels of Government, citizens and the private sector. The latter would involve intersectoral interventions that act on the social determinants of health, with the aim of addressing all forms of malnutrition through a participatory, consensual and joint effort.

We reiterate our commitment to participating actively in multilateral processes to get back on the right track towards achieving our common goals.

The Acting President: May I take it that it is the wish of the Assembly to conclude its consideration of agenda item 14?

It was so decided.

The meeting rose at 11.25 a.m.

United Nations A/72/PV.109

General Assembly

Official Records

Seventy-second session

109th plenary meeting
Friday, 27 July 2018, 10 a.m.
New York

President: Mr. Lajčák ..... (Slovakia)

In the absence of the President, Mr. Tevi (Vanuatu), Vice-President, took the Chair.

The meeting was called to order at 10.10 a.m.

Agenda item 7 (*continued*)

Organization of work, adoption of the agenda and allocation of items

The Acting President: Members will recall that at its second plenary meeting, on 15 September 2017, the General Assembly decided to allocate sub-item (b) of agenda item 19 to the Second Committee. To enable the General Assembly to take action expeditiously on draft resolution A/72/L.60/Rev.1 and A/72/L.60/ Rev.1/Corr.1, may I take it that the Assembly wishes to consider sub-item (b) of agenda item 19 directly in plenary meeting and to proceed immediately to its consideration?

It was so decided.

Agenda item 19 (*continued*)

Sustainable development

(b) Follow-up to and implementation of the SIDS Accelerated Modalities of Action (SAMOA) Pathway and the Mauritius Strategy for the Further Implementation of the Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States

Draft resolution (A/72/L.60/Rev.1 and A/72/L.60/Rev.1/Corr.1)

The Acting President: The General Assembly will now take action on the draft resolution entitled "Modalities for the high-level review of the SIDS Accelerated Modalities of Action (SAMOA) Pathway", issued as document A/72/L.60/Rev.1 and A/72/L.60/Rev.1/Corr.1.

I now give the floor to the representative of Egypt to introduce, on behalf of the Group of 77 and China, as well as Palau and the Republic of Moldova, draft resolution A/72/L.60/Rev. 1 and A/72/L.60/Rev.1/Corr.1.

Ms. Elgarf (Egypt): It is my honour, on behalf of the Group of 77 and China, as well as Palau and the Republic of Moldova, to introduce draft resolution A/72/L.60/Rev.1 and A/72/L.60/Rev.1/Corr.1, on the modalities for the high-level review of the small island developing States (SIDS) Accelerated Modalities of Action (SAMOA) Pathway, which is of a technical rather than substantive nature.

As we approach the mid-term mark since the historic adoption of the Samoa Pathway four years ago, we are heartened to know of the continued level of support from the international community to implement the pledges made. However, much more needs to be done. Although we welcome the recognition of SIDS as countries with special circumstances for development and as countries facing extreme economic and ecological vulnerabilities, we need to ensure that that recognition is matched with the resources required to help achieve the goals, as set forth by the Samoa Pathway. For small island developing States, the successful implementation of other agreements, including the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, is closely linked to the implementation of the Samoa Pathway.

This record contains the text of speeches delivered in English and of the translation of speeches delivered in other languages. Corrections should be submitted to the original languages only. They should be incorporated in a copy of the record and sent under the signature of a member of the delegation concerned to the Chief of the Verbatim Reporting Service, room U-0506 (verbatimrecords@un.org). Corrected records will be reissued electronically on the Official Document System of the United Nations (http://documents.un.org).

18-24165 (E)

Accessible document Please recycle

The vulnerability faced by small island developing States means that we cannot allow another five years to pass without building upon our resilience. Throughout the coming five years, we cannot merely take stock of and note our unmet commitment and craft another agenda, as time is running out for SIDS. Climate change, water scarcity and natural disasters are accelerating in frequency and intensity. We therefore must build on progress and action, beginning today, to meet those challenges with creativity, cooperation and determination that fully reflect the urgency of the situation. We must clearly understand remaining gaps, scale up initiatives for success and determine how to improve areas of continued difficulty.

The Group of 77 looks forward to maintaining close engagement and receiving the support of all States Members in the process, as we have much we can share and learn from one another to help ensure that we make progress in achieving sustainable development. We look forward to the constructive engagement of delegations in moving forward with the draft resolution, and take this opportunity to express our sincere appreciation to all Member States involved in these negotiations. We look forward to the adoption of the draft resolution.

The Acting President: The assembly will now take a decision or draft resolution A/72/L.60/Rev. 1 and A/72/L.60/Rev.1/Corr.1, entitled "Modalities for the high-level review of the SIDS Accelerated Modalities of Action (SAMOA) Pathway".

I now give the floor to the representative of the Secretariat.

Ms. De Miranda (Department for General Assembly and Conference Management): This oral statement is made in accordance with rule 153 of the rules of procedure of the General Assembly.

Under the terms of paragraph 1 of draft resolution A/72/L.60/Rev.1 and A/72/L.60/Corr.1, the General Assembly would decide that the high-level review will be structured around an opening plenary meeting followed by two multi-stakeholder roundtable sessions with time for an interactive dialogue and a closing plenary meeting. With regard to the request contained in paragraph 1, it is understood that all issues related to the high-level review, including dates, venue, format, organization and scope, are yet to be determined. Accordingly, in the absence of modalities for the high-level review, it is not possible at the present time to estimate the potential cost implications of the requirements for meetings and documentation.

Upon the decision on the modalities format and organization of the conference, the Secretary-General will submit the relevant costs of such requirements, in accordance with rule 153 of the rules of procedure of the General Assembly. Furthermore, the dates of the meetings will have to be determined in consultation with the Department for General Assembly and Conference Management. Accordingly, the adoption of draft resolution A/72/L.60/Rev. 1 and A/72/L.60/Rev.1/Corr.1 will not give rise to any budgetary implications on the programme budget for the biennium 2018-2019.

The Acting President: The draft resolution has closed for e-sponsorship. I give the floor to the representative of the Secretariat.

Ms. De Miranda (Department for General Assembly and Conference Management): I should like to announce that, since the submission of draft resolution A/72/L.60/Rev.1 and A/72/L.60/Rev.1/Corr.1, and in addition to those delegations listed therein, the following countries have become sponsors of the draft resolution: Australia, Canada, New Zealand and Tuvalu.

The Acting President: May I take it that the General Assembly decides to adopt A/72/L.60/Rev.1 and A/72/L.60/Rev.1/Corr.1?

Draft resolution A/72/L.60/Rev.1 and A/72/L.60/Rev.1/Corr.1 was adopted (resolution 72/307).

The Acting President: Before giving the floor to representatives for explanations of vote after the vote, may I remind delegations that explanations of vote are limited to 10 minutes and should be made by delegations from their seats.

Mr. Lawrence (United States of America): This is a brief explanation of position. While we join consensus on resolution 72/307, we would like to take the opportunity to clarify points regarding paragraphs 13 through 16. Certain elements of the small island developing States Accelerated Modalities of Action Pathway, such as on international trade, may have been overtaken by events and may no longer be implementable.

The Acting President: May I take it that it is the wish of the General Assembly to conclude its consideration of sub-item (b) of agenda item 19.

It was so decided.

The meeting rose at 10.20 a.m.

United Nations A/72/PV.110

General Assembly
Seventy-second session

Official Records

110th plenary meeting
Monday, 6 August 2018, 3 p.m.
New York

President: Mr. Lajčák ..... (Slovakia)

The meeting was called to order at 3.05 p.m.

Agenda item 7 (*continued*)

Organization of work, adoption of the agenda and allocation of items: reports of the General Committee

Draft decision (A/72/L.66)

The President: The Assembly will now consider draft decision A/72/L.66.

I give the floor to the representative of the Secretariat.

Ms. De Miranda (Department for General Assembly and Conference Management): This oral statement is made in accordance with rule 153 of the rules of procedure of the General Assembly.

Under the terms of the draft decision A/72/L.66, the General Assembly would decide to transmit the draft decision contained in the annex to the present decision to the General Assembly at its seventy-third session for action. Given that the draft decision on scheduling the high-level meetings of the General Assembly in 2019 contained in the annex to draft decision A/72/L.66 will be transmitted to the seventy-third session for action, the Secretary-General would issue the related programme budget implications of the requirements in accordance with rule 153 of the rules of procedure of the General Assembly when the draft decision is taken up at the seventy-third session. Accordingly, the adoption of draft decision A/72/L.66 would not give rise to any budgetary implications under the programme budget for the biennium 2018-2019.

Copies of the statement I have just read out will also be made available on the PaperSmart portal.

The President: The Assembly will now take action on draft decision A/72/L.66, entitled "High-level meetings of the General Assembly in September 2019".

May I take it that the Assembly decides to adopt draft decision A/72/L.66?

Draft decision A/72/L.66 was adopted (decision 72/559).

The President: I would like to express my sincere thanks to Ambassador Martha Ama Akyaa Pobee of Ghana, facilitator of the informal consultations, who demonstrated great skill and patience in conducting discussions and complex negotiations on the draft decision. I would also like to thank Member States for their valuable contributions in reaching agreement on the draft text.

The General Assembly has thus concluded this stage of its consideration of agenda item 7.

Agenda items 14 and 117(*continued*)

Integrated and coordinated implementation of and follow-up to the outcomes of the major

This record contains the text of speeches delivered in English and of the translation of speeches delivered in other languages. Corrections should be submitted to the original languages only. They should be incorporated in a copy of the record and sent under the signature of a member of the delegation concerned to the Chief of the Verbatim Reporting Service, room U-0506 (verbatimrecords@un.org). Corrected records will be reissued electronically on the Official Document System of the United Nations (http://documents.un.org).

18-25057 (E)

Accessible document Please recycle

United Nations conferences and summits in the economic, social and related fields

Follow-up to the outcome of the Millennium Summit

Draft resolution (A/72/L.67)

The President: The Assembly will now take action on draft resolution A/72/L.67, entitled "Modalities for the Intergovernmental Conference to Adopt the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration".

May I take it that the Assembly decides to adopt draft resolution A/72/L.67?

Draft resolution A/72/L.67 was adopted (resolution 72/308).

The President: The General Assembly has thus concluded this stage of its consideration of agenda items 14 and 117.

Agenda item 127 (*continued*)

Global health and foreign policy

Draft decision (A/72/L.65)

The President: We shall now proceed to consider draft decision A/72/L.65.

I give the floor to the representative of the Secretariat.

Ms. De Miranda (Department for General Assembly and Conference Management): This oral statement is made in accordance with rule 153 of the rules of procedure of the General Assembly.

Under the terms of draft decision A/72/L.65, the General Assembly would decide to transmit the draft resolution contained in the annex to the present draft decision to the General Assembly at its seventy-third session for action. Given that the draft resolution on scheduling the high-level meeting on universal health coverage in 2019 contained in the annex to the draft decision A/72/L.65 will be transmitted to the seventy-third session for action, the Secretary-General would issue the related programme budget implications of the requirements, in accordance with rule 153 of the rules of procedure of the General Assembly, when the draft resolution is taken up at the seventy-third session.

Accordingly, the adoption of draft decision A/72/L.65 would not give rise to any budgetary implications under the programme budget for the biennium 2018-2019.

Copies of the statement that I have just read out will be made available on the PaperSmart portal.

The President: We will now take a decision on draft decision A/72/L.65, entitled "Scope, modalities, format and organization of the high-level meeting on universal health coverage".

May I take it that the Assembly decides to adopt draft decision A/72/L.65?

Draft decision A/72/L.65 was adopted (decision 72/560).

The President: I would like to express my sincere thanks to Ambassador Katalin Annamária Bogyay of Hungary and Ambassador Vitavas Srivihok of Thailand, who demonstrated great ability and patience in their conduct of the discussions and complex negotiations on the draft decision. I also thank Member States for their valuable contributions to reaching an agreement on the draft text.

The General Assembly has thus concluded this stage of its consideration of agenda item 127.

The meeting rose at 3.15 p.m.